



SONOMA ECOLOGY CENTER

Comments on CALFED EIS/EIR

September 10, 1999

We write from the Sonoma Ecology Center, a non-profit community-based watershed organization in Sonoma Valley. We received CALFED funding for watershed management work last year, as part of a watershed conservancy with other local partners. We have also actively participated in the creation of CALFED's Watershed Program over the last year, together with stakeholders from around the CALFED region. We have four comments.

- 1 CALFED should prioritize the most inexpensive, beneficial, durable, efficient ways to solve water supply problems; that is, focus on **conservation**. Water conservation by cities and agriculture will yield immense quantities of water. Urban populations are willing to conserve water, especially if they understand the links between conservation at home and habitat preservation in their vacation areas. To address the role that conservation can play in CALFED's solutions, the solution scope of CALFED must include all areas that use Bay-Delta water or supply water to it, including the Trinity River watershed, several coastal and Bay Area watersheds, and southern California.
- 2 The current level of **linkage, coordination, and oversight** among CALFED's Programs is insufficient to safeguard against violation of one of CALFED's solution principles, namely that CALFED actions should have no re-directed (or third-party) impacts. The actions of each Common Program should be accountable to the objectives of the other Programs.
- 3 Funding for the **Watershed Common Program** should be substantial, commensurate with its unique, essential functions. It is the only Program explicitly pursuing holistic, integrated solutions to watershed problems, not only within individual watersheds but also keeping CALFED actions accountable to its goals across the entire CALFED solution area. It is also the only Program that emphasizes education of the public. Through the Watershed Program, CALFED has the opportunity to turn millions of citizens and landowners into contributors to water conflict solutions, instead of millions of non-point problems.
- 4 CALFED's funding and focus on the **San Francisco Bay Area** needs to increase. The Bay, especially the North Bay, is an ecological bottleneck, providing nursery and feeding grounds for all anadromous Central Valley fish species. Conditions in the North Bay strongly affect the health of anadromous species; degraded conditions there diminish the effectiveness of fisheries restoration work further upstream. Furthermore, the urban populations of the greater Bay Area use water from the Central Valley, so conservation on their part would benefit the Bay-Delta's functioning.

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